

Hall, your light is on.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, members. The issue in 717, as I stated, is one of the Legislature butting in, if you will, putting its nose in the business of the employee/employer relationship as it relates to the City of Omaha and the police union. This issue has been bargained for a number of years. It's bargained in a number of different communities throughout the Midwest, cities of comparable size to the City of Omaha. It has traditionally been one that every type of union activity, the workplace environment, the workplace locale, is of the utmost importance. We do it in a number of other areas when we look at individuals who use seniority for purposes of bidding. I mean think to other jobs, similar type jobs although there aren't too many that are similar to the police union, there are other types of unionized professions that use bidding. The railroads, for example, is one. There are a number of other unions that happen to be municipal in nature that use bidding as a purpose for deciding which jobs they are going to take. Seniority has always been a key factor and it's one of the principal factors for purposes of collective bargaining for deciding where you work, whether or not you have the ability to bump another individual out of a job. That's how the system operates. LB 717 takes that core function of collective bargaining and strips it out and says that public policy of the state is going to be that we're not going to allow that to happen in this case. There's been no substantive case made for this other than Senator Chambers' introduction of the bill. The bill was introduced in the ninth or the tenth day of the legislative session. It was advanced out of the Business and Labor Committee because Senator Chambers has worked more of his magic in that committee. He even got my bill out which I'm very grateful for, but it is an issue that has not had outside of the fact that the mayor and the chief of police I think have been down much because Senator Chambers has basically forced them to come down and argue that this is something that they would like to see happen. But who wouldn't want to see it happen? Who wouldn't want to have their hand strengthened for purposes of negotiating with the police union, especially when you don't have to do anything other than to ask the Legislature to pass the bill? You get basically a concession without offering anything. You're getting more than a concession. You get it flat out taken away. You don't even have to address the issue. And the point in the amendments that I had pending was that what you're going to see happen is if you adopt LB 717 and advance it